

Process for Approval of Practitioner Preparation Programs Seeking Registration with Iowa College Student Aid Commission

BACKGROUND:

For decades, educators¹ licensed as such in other states have sought and successfully achieved credentialing from the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners [“BoEE”]. These candidates for educator licensure in Iowa have attended educator preparation programs outside of Iowa and have been initially licensed in another state. No entity in Iowa has needed to approve the educator preparation programs for these candidates.

NOTE: The contents of this memorandum are limited to those educator preparation programs offered in Iowa via distance education only by institutions that have no physical presence in Iowa and whose graduates do not seek initial educator licensing from the BoEE.

ISSUE:

New federal Department of Education regulations (34 CFR § 600.9) require an institution that offers online courses and programs, including educator preparation programs, to be registered with each state in which students of the programs reside, if the state requires that the institution be registered in that state. Iowa Code Chapter 261B, as modified effective July 1, 2009, requires an institution that maintains or conducts a course of instruction in Iowa, including through distance education, to register with the Iowa College Student Aid Commission [“Commission”]. Thus, institutions offering distance education programs which have never been previously required to register in Iowa may now be required to do so.

Commencing with July 1, 2004, the Commission has had to comply with Iowa Code section 261B.3A(2), which states as follows:

A practitioner preparation program operated by a institution that applies to register the program in accordance with this chapter shall, in order to register, be accredited by an agency or organization approved or recognized by the United States department of education or a successor agency, be approved by the state

¹ As used herein, “educator” means teacher, institution administrator, institution counselor, institution audiologist, institution psychologist, institution social worker, speech-language pathologist, or supervisor of special education (support and orientation and mobility specialist).

board of education pursuant to section 256.7, subsection 3, and, subsequently, be approved for operation by the commission.

Prior to July 1, 2009, institutions not having a physical presence in Iowa were not required to register with the Commission. Now that Iowa Code and federal regulations require certain institutions offering distance education programs in Iowa to register with the Commission, the Commission cannot permit an institution to offer educator preparation programs under its Iowa registration without State Board of Education approval.

An institution seeking approval by the Iowa State Board of Education of an educator preparation program offered in Iowa via distance education must demonstrate all of the following criteria:

1. That the institution seeks to offer programs in Iowa via distance education only; the institution has no bricks-and-mortar presence in Iowa.²
2. That a candidate graduating from the institution obtains initial educator licensure/certification from the state in which the candidate completed his/her preparation.³
3. That the candidates graduating from the institution receive prominent written disclosure from the institution in all published and Web-based materials that describe the educator preparation program(s) as follows (slight paraphrasing is permitted):
 - A student seeking an Iowa educator license is advised that successful completion of this institution's program(s) of educator preparation does not qualify you for initial educator licensure by the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners.
 - A candidate seeking licensure in the State of Iowa must first be licensed/certified as an educator in the state in which preparation was completed. This institution shall assist a candidate in contacting the appropriate licensing board in the state in which the candidate's preparation was completed. This institution shall assist the candidate in understanding the requirements of the appropriate licensing board prior to the candidate's completion of this institution's program(s) of educator preparation.

² An institution with a physical ("bricks-and-mortar") presence in Iowa must have full chapter 79 review process.

³ An institution whose candidates seek initial licensure from the Iowa BoEE must have full chapter 79 review process. The "state in which the candidate completed his/her preparation" means the state in which a majority of the candidate's instruction originates.

- A candidates seeking subsequent licensure from the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners must contact that Board (515/281-5849; <http://www.boee.iowa.gov/>) for licensure requirements in Iowa.
4. That the institution's educator preparation programs are regionally accredited.
 5. That the institution is approved/accredited to offer the same educator preparation program(s) it wishes to offer in Iowa by an entity with authority over educator preparation programs in the state in which the institution maintains its primary physical presence. [If the institution is approved/accredited to offer the same educator preparation program(s) it wishes to offer in Iowa by an entity with authority over educator preparation programs in other states in which the institution maintains a physical presence, the institution is encouraged to present proof of the same to the Iowa State Board of Education.]

An institution is not required to seek the Iowa State Board of Education's approval for educator preparation programs it offers via distance education unless the Commission requires the institution to register in Iowa in order to offer its distance education programs in Iowa. Nevertheless, all institutions that offer educator preparation program via distance education in Iowa are expected to comply with the disclosure requirements described in item #3 above.

Process:

1. Programs must submit evidence that the above-mentioned criteria have been met.
2. Submitted materials will be reviewed by the Practitioner Preparation Consultant at the Iowa Department of Education.
3. Review status and feedback will occur within 30 days upon receipt.
4. Reviewed Program(s) will be presented to the Iowa State Board of Education for approval. Timeline of presentation is dependent upon Board calendar and agenda availability.
5. Approved program(s) may register with the Iowa College Student Aid Commission (877-272-4456).

Programs interested in participating in the approval process should contact:

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